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ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 18 titles deal with a variety of topics, including the following: some effects of nonstandard English in counseling; the status of speech instruction in Iowa high schools; communications analyses of a university and a public utility company; the relative efficacy of bibliotherapy and assertion training in learning assertiveness; male/female dominance in communication; disputed authorship of the "Liberty or Death" speech; the effect of two strategies on students' learning of standard language; the influence of room design on small group communication; the effects of rates of speech compression on student learning; antecedents of individual differences in students' social-cognitive and communicative performance; the effect of stereotyping, dialectical similarity, and issue relevance on interpersonal perception; the relationship between conformity and verbal behavior; error acceptability in written business communication; the development of conversational rules in children; the effect of communication messages upon the building of trust between sexes; and language standards and communicative style in the black church. (GW)

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Speech Communication and Communication Processes:

Abstracts of Doctoral Dissertations Published in Dissertation Abstracts International, March through June 1977 (Vol. 37 Nos. 9 through 12), Part Two

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Wright, Richard Louis

LANGUAGE STANDARDS AND COMMUNICATIVE STYLE IN THE BLACK CHURCH

SOME EFFECTS OF NONSTANDARD ENGLISH IN COUNSELING

HEUBUSCH, Norbert John, Ph.D.
The Pennsylvania State University, 1976

This investigation examined the possible effects on clients when a counselor introduced certain nonstandard English words, generically referred to as "four letter words" into an initial counseling session. It was hypothesized that clients exposed to the use of the four letter words would express dissatisfaction with the counselors which dissatisfaction would be reflected in three measures, (1) a proxemic behavior test, (2) a Counseling Effectiveness Rating Scale and (3) a Rating Scale of Counselor Effectiveness.

It was believed that the appearance in counseling literature of the four letter words, particularly by prominent counseling authors, without published research as to the impact of the words on the client, might lead counselors to adopt the usage into their own practices as a matter of course. It was believed that this practice could also be aided and abetted by the fact that the nonstandard English words have come into almost common usage in every medium of communication today, almost as being totally acceptable.

The thesis examines the areas of the significance of the initial counseling session, current use of nonstandard English, the language of the counselor, permissive areas of usage, and counselor effectiveness and client satisfaction.

A total of 60 adult subjects, 30 male and 30 female, were randomly selected and assigned to one of two types of counseling, and to one of three counselors. Twenty of the subjects were individually interviewed by each counselor, five men and five women role-playing in a session in which only standard English was used; and five men and five women in a session in which each of the nonstandard English words was used once.

The research hypothesis, that the clients hearing the nonstandard English would reflect their dissatisfaction on the three dependent variable measures, was supported. [Proxemic Behavior, $p < .029$; Counseling Effectiveness Rating Scale, $p < .034$; Rating Scale of Counselor Effectiveness, $p < .001$.]

Order No. 77-9679, 58 pages.

A SURVEY OF THE STATUS OF SPEECH INSTRUCTION IN THE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE STATE OF IOWA

HINRICHS, Anne Lancaster, Ph.D.
Saint Louis University, 1976

The problem addressed in this study was the status of speech education in the public high schools in the State of Iowa. The general problem concerns (1) What percentage of schools require of each student participation in a formal speech course? (2) What opportunities for speech instruction are available beyond the basic speech course? (3) What percentage of students are enrolled in speech courses? (4) What co-curricular activities are available to students? (5) What are the observable differences in the patterns of speech education among schools of various sizes? (6) In Iowa high schools which do not offer a formal speech course, what percentage of the English curriculum is devoted to speech instruction? (7) What is the background of preparation of speech teachers in the State of Iowa? (8) What are the characteristics of elective speech programs in Iowa which elicit a high percentage of student participation?

The data were gathered from the returns of a questionnaire, which was mailed to all 466 public high schools in the state and was returned by 408 schools, or 87.56 per cent. Data were obtained for phase two of this study from each of the selected schools by means of an interview with an administrator or a teacher. The data were tabulated for each of five enrollment classifications, very small, small, medium, large, and very large.

From the information which was received from nearly 88 per cent of the public high schools in the State of Iowa, the following conclusions are drawn: (1) Slightly more than 90 per cent of all schools reported offering a basic speech course, and 9 per cent of the students were enrolled for one semester at the time of the survey. (2) Of those schools offering a basic speech course, only about one-third require it to be taken for graduation. (3) Those schools requiring speech are most likely to require it at the sophomore level or junior level. (4) Among the smaller schools which indicated that they do not offer a basic speech course, more than half indicated formal speech units to be an integral part of the English curriculum. (5) Nearly all schools surveyed offer some type of co-curricular speech activity, with individual events being the most popular and three-act plays the second most popular. (6) A large number of schools reported neither a speech major or a speech minor on their faculties.

In phase two of this study the researcher asked ten selected schools what made their speech programs superior in terms of student acceptance or student participation in speech courses and activities. As in most educational studies which have been conducted asking what makes the critical difference, the overwhelming response to this inquiry was "the teacher." The conclusion drawn by this researcher is that the primary factor which makes a speech program outstanding is the personality, skill, and knowledge of the teacher. This points up the need for well-trained, enthusiastic, and dedicated speech teachers in every high school. Order No. 77-12,105, 120 pages.

THE COMMUNICATIONS ANALYSIS OF A KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY

MacAULAY, James B., Ph.D.
Case Western Reserve University, 1976

This research addresses in general the place of communication theory in the reconstruction of social theory. A model was developed to analyse the essential information transfer processes which are involved in any social communication system. This model represents the elements of an information source in abstract knowledge space, the properties of which permit the source to be decomposed into precise relations of influence and interdependence.

The university was chosen as the case study of a knowledge community. Its faculty performs as a formal source of information through curriculum and publication channels. The relevance of the faculty as a teaching source and as a research source was represented for a common time period. An information theoretic type of communications analysis was carried out and, in particular, addressed to the problem of defining, comparing and evaluating the two networks of relations among faculty which obtained when it was accessed as either a teaching source or a research source.

The degree of integration supplied by each linkage or ordered pair in a matrix of source elements was represented; this measure combines a notion of the importance of the linkage in terms of its selective information and a probability notion of the cost of inquiring through the linkage. All such linkages were found to be distributed in Zipfian fashion, indicating a hyperbolic pattern in the rate of diminishing returns, which is obtained when selections are made on any finite source. The properties of this distribution permit the specification of a threshold linkage and, subsequently, the network structure of the source.

The faculties of science were thus partitioned into a complex of teaching and research fronts, which were in turn compared and evaluated. The policy and research implications of the work have been considered with reference (1) to problems of managing large-scale research and information organizations, (2) to the problem of policy for science and the related problem of information in public policy arenas, and (3) to the preliminary requirements for an objective investigation of hypotheses of interest in the sociology of knowledge.

Order No. 77-11,935, 209 pages.

A CASE STUDY OF INTERGROUP COMMUNICATION

MATTHIESEN, Eric Earl, Ph.D.
The University of Michigan, 1976

Chairman: John E. Baird

This study is an investigation of four subgroups. The questions chosen for study were: How are lengthy sequences of subgroup behavior patterned? On what variables do the formation of these patterns depend?

In order to answer these questions, three sessions of a classroom group, previously studied by Mann, were content analyzed.[1] The category system used was a scheme for recording an observer's inferences about the possible relevance each speech delivered to the group had for the speaker's: (1) perception of his own membership in the four subgroups; (2) orientation (positive or negative) toward each of the four subgroups; and (3) acceptance or rejection of another's orientation (positive or negative) toward each of the four subgroups. This system categorized the struggle between individuals over which of the strategies and normative prescriptions of the various subgroups would dominate the parent group.

The separate acts of individuals were then recoded and combined to form units of collective behavior. The procedure for recoding was as follows: First, cut points were set so that when two or more members of the same subgroup spoke consecutively the acts that had been scored for those individuals would be collapsed into one interval. The resulting intervals were then coded according to how they referred to: (1) the ingroup (the subgroup from which the speaker spoke) and (2) each of the outgroups (the remaining subgroups).

Frequency tables and trend lines were then constructed. From this data, four patterns of collective behavior were identified. They were: 1. A decline in the positive statements directed to one's own group over time. 2. A decline in the negative statement directed to other groups over time. 3. The existence of co-acting subgroups. 4. Reciprocation by those who are the targets of co-acting subgroups.

Units of collective behavior were then cross-tabulated in an attempt to identify the variables on which collective patterns of behavior depend. Using this data, the decline in positive value assigned to one's own subgroup and the decline in negative value directed to other subgroups were shown to be linked by a mutual and reciprocal relationship. Finally, data generated by the cross-tabulation of collective behavior disclosed a dependent relationship between similarity of tactics and the co-action of subgroups.

[1]Richard Mann, Graham S. Gibbard, and John J. Hartman, Interpersonal Style and Group Development (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1967).

Order No. 77-7986, 128 pages.

THE RELATIVE EFFICACY OF BIBLIOTHERAPY AND ASSERTION TRAINING ON ASSERTIVENESS LEVELS OF A GENERAL POPULATION AND A LIBRARY PERSONNEL POPULATION

MCGOVERN, Cassandra Jane, Ph.D.
Northwestern University, 1976

Chairperson: Dr. Robert Menges

Purpose: The major purpose of this study was to determine the relative efficacy of bibliotherapy and assertion training in learning assertive attitudes and behaviors. A related purpose was to compare the treatments within a general population and a library personnel population as well as compare treatments between the two populations.

Hypotheses: It was hypothesized that bibliotherapy would produce greater changes on attitude than on behavior measures, that assertion training would produce greater changes on behavior than on attitude measures, that bibliotherapy prior to assertion training would produce greater change than assertion training prior to bibliotherapy, that library personnel would show greater attitude change regardless of treatment and that the general population would show greater behavioral change regardless of treatment.

Sample: The subjects included thirty-seven enrollees in a community college population and twenty-four enrollees in a library personnel population (professional and nonprofessional).

Procedures: Within each population, subjects were randomly assigned to a bibliotherapy group or to group assertion training. There was no control group. Bibliotherapy consisted of reading and discussing a popular self-help book on assertion, Stand Up, Speak Out, Talk Back! Assertion training consisted of lectures on rights, types of assertive responses, rational thinking, and role playing specific situations. Paper and pencil measures were used to determine self-actualization level (Personal Orientation Inventory), self-esteem (Tennessee Self Concept Scale), and assertiveness (Adult Self Expression Scale). These measures were administered pre and post. A simulation experience (The Nassau Game) was administered as a post-test only. The first post-tests were given midway through the five 2½ hour sessions so that participants could reverse groups and experience a full treatment. The assertiveness scale was administered during the last session for a second post-test. T-tests were applied to pre and post data to determine significant changes within treatments. Analysis of variance was used for between treatment and between population comparisons. The significance level for accepting the five hypotheses was fixed at the five percent (.05) level of confidence.

Major Findings: (1) The hypotheses were not supported possibly due to various threats to the validity of the research design. (2) Within group treatments demonstrated significant changes pre to post for self-actualization and assertiveness; only the general population bibliotherapy treatment had significant changes on self esteem. (3) Attrition was higher for bibliotherapy treatments for both populations, indicating a preferred mode of social interaction in assertion training. (4) Those who experienced bibliotherapy prior to assertion training demonstrated greater gains, pre to post, within treatments. (5) Library personnel, although associated with reading, liked bibliotherapy less than did the general population.

Conclusions: From the issues addressed in The Review of the Literature, it was found that: (1) Treatments, pre to post, do modify attitudes, with more changes apparent in bibliotherapy. Treatments did not modify behavior, although in the general population, there was a nonsignificant trend for assertion training to be more effective. (2) Within the constraints of this study, bibliotherapy and assertion training were found to be equally effective. (3) The library population liked bibliotherapy less than did the general population. Bibliotherapy methods and materials were not assessed in this study. (4) The bibliotherapy (insight) treatment, pre to post, produced changes in self evaluation but not in behavior. (5) Bibliotherapy changed self report attitude measures of assertiveness and self-actualization, and minimally on self concept measures.

Recommendations: For research, recommendations include (a) studying various philosophies of assertion trainers' treatments, (b) studying a philosophy of assertion training by comparing multi-components, (c) determining whether specific populations are necessary for significantly better learning or because they are more attractive to participants, and (d) assessing individual as well as group improvement within a treatment.

For practice, recommendations include (a) for the librarian population, concentrating on social skill acquisition rather than on personal needs and rights, and (b) for the general population, concentrating on a personal belief system and self regard rather than on social interaction. An individualized instruction approach is suggested in order to address each participant's performance objectives.

Order No. 77-10,064, 318 pages.

MALE AND FEMALE DOMINANCE IN COMMUNICATION

OCTIGAN, Mary Withrow, Ph.D.
University of Denver, 1976

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore male/female patterns of dominance in dyadic speech communication and to determine the influence of speaker sex, speaker commitment to the Women's Movement, and observer feedback on these patterns of dominant speech behavior.

Procedure of the Study

An experimental method of research was utilized to conduct the study, employing a cross-sectional analytic design to identify the effects of pre-existing and intervening variables on a specific criterion of performance.

Sixty college students, 30 male and 30 female were classified as either committed or uncommitted to feminist principles on the basis of responses to an "Attitudes Toward Women" questionnaire.

Subjects in four descriptive categories, Profeminist Male, Traditional Male, Profeminist Female and Traditional Female, representing ten possible subject combinations, engaged in 20-minute conversational dyads. Third-party observers recorded by audio tape and checklist instances of speech interruptions and overlaps before and after a feedback intervention statement regarding male conversational dominance. Observation techniques were based on the "turn-taking" model of speaker alternation, which characterized dominant speech behavior as the violation of a speaker's right to complete a conversational "turn."

A one-way analysis of variance technique was applied to test for differences in mixed-sex and same-sex dominance, followed by Scheffé tests to compare means. A three-way analysis of variance was utilized to test the main effects of sex, feminist attitude, and feedback on total dominant speech behavior and to test for combined effects of the independent variables. The .05 level of significance was required for acceptance of the research hypotheses.

Results of the Study

Throughout conversations examined in the study, males evidenced significantly greater speech dominance than did female subjects. In particular, males dominated female partners in mixed-sex conversation. However, a symmetry of dominant behavior existed within same-sex dyads. The sex of conversational partners was concluded to be the determinant of symmetry or imbalance of dominant speech behavior in face-to-face conversation.

While speaker sex exerted significant influence on conversational dominance, virtually no effect was attributed to the profeminist or traditional attitude of the speakers. Furthermore, little interaction was present between variables of the study. The conclusion was advanced that a state of commitment to principles of the Women's Movement will not serve to alter the pattern of male and female conversational dominant behavior.

All subject groups of the study reduced dominant speech behavior after receiving mildly critical feedback. No significant difference was noted in feedback effects on either the two male, or the two female profeminist or traditional subject groups. Feedback was concluded to be effective in modifying speech behavior even when such behavior represents a manifestation of strong personal attitudes. Therefore, feedback principles may well inhibit feminist attempts to adopt male language patterns.

Implication of the Study

The findings and conclusions of the study seem to indicate that male and female patterns of speech dominance and submissiveness represent a reflection of male and female roles in society, and may not be deliberately modified as a vehicle to alter speech behavior significantly when the behavior mirrors societal expectations. Order No. 77-8737, 158 pages.

A STUDY IN DISPUTED AUTHORSHIP: THE "LIBERTY OR DEATH" SPEECH

OLSEN, Stephen Taylor, Ph.D.
The Pennsylvania State University, 1976

According to tradition, Patrick Henry's "Liberty or Death" speech was delivered on 23 March 1775. No stenographic notes were taken of the speech; Patrick Henry left no written account of the speech; and no text of the "Liberty or Death" speech appeared during Henry's lifetime. It was not until 1816 that the text was published as part of a biography of Patrick Henry, written by William Wirt. The question which has engaged scholars ever since is whether the text reported in Wirt's book may be attributed to Patrick Henry or whether it is the composition of a ghostwriter such as William Wirt. One hundred and sixty years after the text of the "Liberty or Death" speech was published, identification of the composer of the text is still a controversial issue.

In this study, we seek to determine whether or not computerized, quantitative methodologies can supply data to help us answer the "Liberty or Death" authorship question by providing a different sort of evidence from that ordinarily used by historians. The "Liberty or Death" speech, therefore, serves as an experimental and demonstrative vehicle for developing and comparing quantitative methods of authorship attribution.

The historical evidence pertaining to the rhetorical situation which allegedly evoked the speech by Patrick Henry is examined in Chapter 1. Readers who are well-acquainted with that material may wish to begin with Chapter 2 wherein we trace the historical debate concerning the authorship of the "Liberty or Death" speech.

An introduction to quantitative methods of authorship discrimination is presented in Chapter 3. In that chapter, we limit on the basis of historical evidence the field of probable authors to three men (Patrick Henry, William Wirt, and St. George Tucker) and detail the general methodology which was used to establish behavioral norms for the language usage of the three men which were then compared with similar stylistic features in the "Liberty or Death" text. The total data base of words analyzed for this study was 329,450 words: 1,217 words in the "Liberty or Death" speech; 78,626 words

from thirty-three texts composed by Patrick Henry; 133,890 words from twenty-nine texts composed by William Wirt; and 115,718 words from thirteen texts composed by St. George Tucker. In seeking to determine if one of the possible authors used language in a phenomenal manner that was distinctive from the other authors' use of the same linguistic system, we examined the fifteen specific stylistic features which follow: (1) Type-of-sentence; (2) Mean Words-per-sentence; (3) Mean Words-per-verbal-segment; (4) Mean Letters-per-word; (5) Rank-frequency; (6) Regular Type-token Ratio; (7) Carroll Type-token Ratio; (8) Yule's "K"; (9) Reading-ease; (10) Preposition-token Ratio; (11) Overstate-understate Ratio; (12) Defensive Quality; (13) Qualification-token Ratio; (14) Marker Words from Miller-Newman-Friedman List; (15) Marker Words from "Liberty or Death" List.

The next three chapters contain the data and the analyses drawn from the examination of three categories of language variables: Chapter 4 -- Linguistic Stylistic Tests (features 1–9); Chapter 5 -- Word-categories (features 10–13); and Chapter 6 -- Marker Words (features 14–15).

A summary of the major conclusions of this study is presented in Chapter 7 together with suggestions for further research. A selective summary of the conclusions follows. (1) On the basis of the historical evidence examined in Chapter 2, St. George Tucker is the most likely author of the "Liberty or Death" speech. He probably composed the text sometime between 31 January 1805 and 16 August 1815. (2) The allegation by some scholars that considerable "stylistic" differences exist between the "Liberty or Death" speech and Henry's other speeches does not comport with the linguistic stylistic evidence presented in Chapter 4. (3) On the basis of every marker word test, we may conclude that St. George Tucker is the most likely author to have written the "Liberty or Death" speech. (4) The preponderance of both historical and quantitative evidence presented in this study supports the claim that St. George Tucker was the composer of the "Liberty or Death" text. (5) Researchers need a package of tests for attributing authorship so that the final conclusions are the product of weighing cumulative test results and are not dependent upon the successful discrimination of a single variable. Several variables which were successful identifiers of authors in other studies failed as author discriminators in this study. (6) The examples of late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century discourse examined in this study show that the encoding behavior of Henry, Wirt, and Tucker was frequently constrained by their mode or submode of communication. (7) Marker word tests appear to be the most promising means of attributing authorship of disputed texts. Order No. 77-9582, 274 pages.

A COMPARISON OF THE EFFECT OF TWO STRATEGIES ON THE LEARNING OF STANDARD LANGUAGE BY ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

PARKS, Lillian Hornetta, Ph.D.
Saint Louis University, 1976

This investigation was undertaken to determine which of two teaching strategies, discrimination usage (DU) or usage discrimination (UD), would be more effective at grades two and six in teaching standard language to speakers of nonstandard language. The focus was on age appropriateness of strategies. Three research hypotheses were tested: (1) second grade students instructed by the UD method would produce higher score gains on selected instruments than comparable second graders using the DU strategy; (2) sixth grade students instructed by the DU method would produce higher score gains on selected instruments than comparable sixth graders using UD strategy; and (3) students in the second and sixth grade experimental groups would produce higher score gains on selected instruments than comparable second and sixth grade students involved in the regular curriculum.

The location of the study was East St. Louis, Illinois during the 1975–1976 school year. The subjects consisted of sixty second grade students in two intact classrooms with one classroom being assigned to Treatment I (UD) and the other classroom assigned to Treatment II (DU). Sixty sixth grade students from two intact groups were also part of the experimental group with thirty assigned to Treatment I (UD) and thirty to Treatment II (DU). Thirty second grade students and thirty sixth grade students, who were part of two intact groups in the same school as the experimental subjects, represented a group which received only "regular" language instruction.

Students in the experimental and regular groups were pretested in September, 1975 on the Templin-Darley, Johnson Test and Project Speak Test and were post-tested on these same instruments in February, 1976.

The pre-post mean gains made by the six groups on the instruments were analyzed according to grade level. Analysis of Variance was applied to the mean gains to determine if they were statistically significantly different. The data were further analyzed by student's t for Independent samples to determine which mean gains were significantly different among the three groups for each grade level. To eliminate any bias which could be attributed to the teachers rather than the teaching strategy utilized, the teachers exchanged teaching strategies and lesson plans after three months.

Analysis of the mean score gains made by the three groups of second grade students revealed that on one instrument, the Templin-Darley, there was statistical difference between Group I (UD) and Group II (DU). The DU group produced higher mean score gains on the Johnson Test. Both strategies produced larger gains on all instruments than did those used with students in the regular classroom.

Analysis of data for the three groups of sixth grade students indicated statistical significance between the two experimental groups on all the instruments except the PST. The highest difference occurred with students using the UD strategy. Both experimental groups mean score gains were higher on all instruments than Group III (Regular).

Based upon the score gains reported, it would appear that usage-discrimination at the sixth grade level was the more effective strategy. At the second grade level, the scores indicate that the discrimination-usage strategy was more effective.

The results offer evidence that if students are to improve in language, special teaching may be necessary and that additional gains may be affected by use of strategies which are age-appropriate. Order No. 77-12,121, 129 pages.

THE INFLUENCE OF ROOM DESIGN ON SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATION

PENDELL, Sue Davis, Ph.D.
University of Utah, 1976

Chairman: B. Aubrey Fisher

That room design influences communication is a commonly held belief although no empirical research exists to support this belief. Research does exist which looks at the influence of room design on behavior, and this research falls under three theoretical perspectives: environmental reinforcement theory, architectural determinism, and interaction theory.

Environmental reinforcement theory, developed from Hull's mediation orientation toward Watsonian behaviorism, says that individual differences mediate the influence of the environment on behavior. Research from this perspective suggests that age, sex, and personality characteristics may serve as mediating variables.

Architectural determinism, based on Skinnerian behaviorism, assumes that physical settings determine the behavior within those settings. Research from this perspective indicates that different rooms cause different behaviors.

Interaction theory, grounded in the philosophy of symbolic interactionism, emphasizes the existence of adaptive processes between immediate surroundings and individuals. Individuals attach meaning to certain elements of the environment, thereby enacting an environment, and this enacted environment in turn influences the individual. Research from this perspective indicates that interaction theory is a viable explanation for the relationship of environment and behavior.

However, research from all three perspectives suffers from two problems: control of environmental elements and lack of focus on communication. Consequently, the present study attempted to isolate the most common elements of room design, controlling those elements not manipulated, in an effort to determine their effect on communication patterns.

Room shape and interior decoration were the independent variables in a 3 x 3 experimental design. The three room shapes were square, oval, and rectangular; the three levels of interior decoration were rasty, mediocre, and classy. Three rooms were built in order to control environmental elements other than shape and decoration.

Subjects were recruited from Speech Communication 101, Winter Quarter 1976. Twenty-seven groups of three subjects per group were assigned to the nine experimental conditions, three groups per condition (N = 81). Subjects discussed a standard group discussion topic. Dependent measures included an interaction analysis of the group discussions and a questionnaire consisting of demographic and perceptual items.

The study shows that room design has no effect on communication behavior. Neither room shape, interior decoration, nor the interaction of the environmental variables affected patterns of communication. In addition, the study indicates that while people are aware of their immediate surroundings they feel these surroundings have little influence on their communication.

These results are best explained from the perspective of interaction theory. Either subjects noticed the environment but attached no meaning to elements of the setting, thereby enacting no environment, or subjects considered the environment appropriate to the type of activity occurring within it; consequently, the environment exerted no special influence.

Related to the theoretical explanation for results are empirical explanations. Group task, category system of analysis, statistics, and time all provide possible explanations for the results of this study. Order No. 77-8450, 104 pages.

THE EFFECTS OF RATES OF COMPRESSION ON THE STUDENTS' LEARNING OF VERBALIZED CONTENT

REYNOLDS, Harold Morgan, Ed.D.
Oklahoma State University, 1976

Scope of Study: This dissertation explores the students' learning of taped lectures at three different speaking rates. One rate was considered to be a normal rate of speech most frequently heard in a typical classroom lecture. The other two rates of speech were compressed from this same lecture to 75% and 60% of the original delivery time. There were two original taped lectures involved in this study, each consisting of the same three speaking rates as described above. The two taped lectures were presented at a one-week interval. Testing of each lecture's content was done immediately after hearing each tape. Each test consisted of 17 items with four alternatives offered for each item. The students were instructed to select the best two answers from the four alternatives presented. 74 Students enrolled in three sections of Utilization of Instructional Media in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction Education at Oklahoma State University were asked to participate in the research. The three experimental sections were scheduled for the following time periods during the day: 8:30 a.m.; 10:30 a.m.; and 1:30 p.m. Each section was made up of the three speaking rate groups to which the students had been randomly assigned. Statistical data were undertaken to explore any significant differences in learning due to the speaking rate utilized and time of day at which lecture-testing occurred. Statistical analyses were undertaken separately for Lecture-Test I (first week), Lecture-Test II (second week), and for the combined results of both lecture-tests. Mean scores, analyses of variance, Newman-Keuls procedures and Newman-Keuls Multiple Comparison procedures were computed to evaluate the results.

Findings and Conclusions: Results of the experiment revealed a significant difference at the .05 level of significance among the three speech rate groups' mean scores. This was true for Lecture-Test I, Lecture-Test II and the combination of lecture-tests. The results of Lecture-Test I, Lecture-Test II and the combined lecture-tests revealed the Normal speech rate mean was significantly higher than the 60% compression rate mean. In Lecture-Test I there was no significant difference between the Normal rate mean and the 75% compression rate mean. The results from Lecture-Test II and the combined lecture-tests revealed the Normal rate mean was significantly higher than both the score means of the 60% and 75% compression rate groups. There were no significant differences found between the 60% compression rate mean and the 75% compression rate mean among Lecture-Test I, II or the combined lecture-tests. Results of the experiment revealed no significant interaction between time and speech rate for Lecture-Test I. There was found to be significant interaction between time and speech rate, however, for Lecture-Test II and the combined lecture-tests at the 8:30 and 1:30 sections. It was revealed that in the 8:30 section of Lecture-Test II and the combined lecture-tests, both the Normal speech rate and the 75% compression rate scored significantly higher than the 60% compression rate. In the 1:30 section of Lecture-Test II, the Normal rate scored significantly higher than the 75% compression rate. No significant differences were found in the 10:30 section. Order No. 77-5169, 79 pages.

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION VARIABLES IN A PUBLIC UTILITY COMPANY

RINGS, Robert Leon, Ph.D.
Ohio University, 1976

Director of Dissertation: Robert S. Goyer

This study's purpose is to explore the relationships between communicative aspects of the role-definition process and different types of role stress with regard to job satisfaction.

The basic question pursued in this study is: To what degree are communicative environmental and communicative behavioral conditions of work group members related to significant cognitive-emotional conditions of role ambiguity and conflict, job satisfaction, and the propensity to leave the organization?

Reports of previous research indicate that communicative and role variables have been studied separately. This study's survey questionnaire used the variable scales of Brayfield and Rothe (1951) regarding job satisfaction, Rogers (1973) concerning communicative environment and behaviors, and Johnson and Stinson (1974 and 1975) regarding the propensity to leave and role ambiguity and conflict. Demographic data collected encompassed sex, tenure, race, and education.

Pilot testing established that the reliability values (KR-20) of the variable scales ranged from .32 to .99. The survey for the main sample subsequently was administered to 108 randomly selected managers, supervisors, and nonsupervising management personnel within the General Office of a large utility. All departments were represented, including professional and nonprofessional personnel.

Pearson Product-Moment correlation coefficients revealed significant relationships among the communicative environment and specific communicative behaviors by particular information sources (supervisors and subordinates and peers) and the role stress variables of role ambiguity (general, task, and feedback) and role conflict (general, intersender, and person role). Previously reported research conclusions were confirmed concerning the relationships among the role stress variables, job satisfaction, and the propensity to leave, as well as between communicative openness and job satisfaction.

Although no significant relationships were revealed between communicative openness (the perceived communicative environment) and role conflict, negative relationships were noted between the former and role ambiguity (general, $p<.05$; and feedback, $p<.05$). Communicative openness correlated positively with job satisfaction ($p<.05$). No significant relationship was noted between openness and the propensity to leave.

The two variables of communicative initiative and communicative receptiveness/responsiveness as general constructs did not appear as highly related to role stress as occurred when they were attributed to respective information sources. Communicative receptiveness/responsiveness correlated significantly and negatively with role ambiguity (general, $p<.01$; and feedback, $p<.01$) and positively, job satisfaction ($p<.001$), while communicative initiative in general was not correlated with any of the cognitive-emotional variables. In contrast, the communicative initiative of the superiors registered negative relationships with role ambiguity (general, $p<.001$; task, $p<.01$; and feedback, $p<.001$) and a positive correlation with job satisfaction ($p<.05$). Communicative initiative-subordinates recorded positive relationships with five of six role stress variables--role ambiguity (general, $p<.01$; and task, $p<.001$), and role conflict (general, $p<.001$; intersender, $p<.01$; and person role, $p<.001$), negative with job satisfaction ($p<.01$), and positive with the propensity to leave ($p<.001$). Communicative initiative-peers had no significant relationships with the cognitive-emotional conditions. Communicative receptiveness/responsiveness-superiors were negatively related to role ambiguity (general, $p<.001$; task, $p<.01$; and feedback, $p<.001$), role conflict-person role ($p<.05$), propensity to leave ($p<05$), and positively related with job satisfaction ($p<.001$). Whereas there were no significant correlations between communicative receptiveness/responsiveness-subordinates and the eight emotional-cognitive variables, the communicative receptiveness/responsiveness of peers had positive associations with role ambiguity (general, $p<.05$; and task, $p<.05$) and role conflict (general, $p<.01$; intersender, $p<.05$; and person role, $p<.05$).

Multivariate analysis of variance tests for main effects of the demographic data revealed very few significant relationships, indicating that in this study the demographic variables were not as closely associated with communicative and cognitive-emotional conditions as were the hierarchical roles.

A general conclusion of this study further supports the key role of the supervisor as a facilitator of two-way communicative behavior and role definition. Not only must the supervisor initiate communicative efforts to help reduce role ambiguity and maintain basic job satisfaction in subordinates, but he must be receptive and responsive to subordinate communicative initiative to help reduce the latter's role ambiguity, role conflict, and the propensity to leave, while maintaining basic job satisfaction.

Order No. 77-10,465, 148 pages.

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF ANTECEDENTS OF INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN SECOND AND SEVENTH GRADERS' SOCIAL-COGNITIVE AND COMMUNICATIVE PERFORMANCE

SARVER, Judy Lee Jones, Ph.D.
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1976

It is clear from past research that while there are substantial age-related developments in children's social-cognitive and communicative development, any group of children of a given age will manifest substantial variability in level of performance. The focus of this exploratory study was upon the antecedents of such individual differences among samples of twenty-one second and nineteen seventh grade children.

Since the study was exploratory, it was decided to examine as wide a variety of potential relevant variables as possible so as to establish the basis for more refined investigations in the future. Several aspects of the children's social-cognitive and communication performance were assessed in an extensive interview involving a number of structured tasks and open-ended questions: (1) the complexity of the interpersonal construct system employed in person perception, (2) social perspective-taking, (3) manifest communication performance in a referential communication task requiring encoding of novel geometric figures, (4) manifest communication performance requiring persuasion in two everyday situations, and (5) teachers' ratings of communication and interpersonal behavior on several dimensions (e.g., general communicative effectiveness, cooperativeness in working with adults and with peers, and so forth). A range of potential antecedents of individual differences in performance in the social-cognitive and communication domains were considered; however, the general focus of the antecedents was upon the role of the parents in socializing the child to an orientation toward sensitivity to others. Accordingly, a parent, typically the mother, of each child participating was interviewed; during the interview the parents completed the same set of tasks as their children so that parent-offspring correlations in performance could be assessed. In addition, the parents responded to a number of structured situations and open-ended questions from which measurements were made of potentially relevant aspects of the parents' childrearing practices: (1) parental mode of dealing with interpersonal problems (e.g., whether the parent oriented the child toward understanding the perspectives of others in social conflict) and (2) parental orientation toward their child's interpersonal feelings in childrearing. Finally, several general demographic indices were included (e.g., age of the parents, occupational status and number of years of school of the father, number of siblings, and so forth).

Significant correlations were revealed between the performances of parents and their offspring on the social perspective-taking and referential communication tasks. In general, the indices of parent's orientation in childrearing did not relate to the children's manifest social-cognitive and communicative performance. However, for the seventh grade sample, a pattern of moderately strong correlations emerged between the teacher's ratings of the child's communication and interpersonal behavior and the parental mode of dealing with interpersonal problems. There was also some evidence that social class (as indexed by the father's occupational status and number of years of schooling) is related to social-cognitive and communication performance. Significant correlations were observed among the second graders between one or the other of these demographic indices and the child's social perspective-taking performance and overall performance on the persuasive communication task; while among the seventh graders one or the other of the indices correlated significantly with the complexity of the child's construct system, social perspective-taking performance, and overall referential communication performance. In addition, other analyses not concerned with the antecedents of interpersonal development provided general support for the thesis that significant interrelations exist among social-cognitive and communication variables.

Order No. 77-9166, 122 pages.

STEREOTYPING, DIALECTICAL SIMILARITY, AND ISSUE RELEVANCY: THEIR EFFECT ON INTERPERSONAL PERCEPTION

SCHENCK-HAMLIN, William Joseph, Ph.D.
University of Oregon, 1976

Adviser: Dr. William R. Elliott

This project was undertaken to investigate the interrelationships among three variables; dialectical similarity, stereotyping and message similarity, and their effect on several speaker evaluation variables; source trustworthiness and competence, interpersonal attraction, and message coherence. The conceptual origins of the project go back to Newcomb's A-B-X model, in which A and B are individuals attracted to one another, and have an orientation toward some object X. From the model, B can assess the communication of A using two available criteria, A and X. B's impression of A can be gained from a variety of cues in A's behavior, appearance or speech, and can be ordered to various dimensions of judgment that B brings to the communication setting. In this experiment, A's dialect acts as a cue to a stereotype in B, and B should react to A on the basis of that stereotype. B also has an evaluation of X (an issue), and to the extent that A's message has an orientation to X as well, B must orient him/herself to the message of A. This is done by determining how similar A is to B on the basis of X.

On the basis of the foregoing analysis, several hypotheses were generated. First, the greater the dialect detection, the stronger the stereotyping. Second, the greater the message agreement, the greater the attraction, trustworthiness and competence. Third, if the association between stereotyping and attraction is negative, then stereotyping will be negatively associated with trustworthiness. Fourth, a dialect associated with a stereotype will interact with a message relevant to the stereotype in the production of trustworthiness, competence, attraction and coherence. Fifth, stereotyping will be positively associated with competence when an issue is relevant to a stereotype. Sixth, message agreement will have a stronger influence on the dependent variables than stereotyping. Seventh, since the project sought to determine whether individuals differed in their stereotyping behavior, it was reasoned that socio-oriented listeners will be associated with message coherence. Eighth, trustworthiness, competence and coherence will be more strongly associated with the subject's evaluation of the issue than attraction.

Since a Southern (American) accent was chosen, a stereotyping scale needed to be developed on the Southerner. A scale measuring perceptions of Southerners was constructed on a sample of one hundred and forty students and was checked for reliability against a second sample of seventy-six students. From several pre-tests two issues were chosen; one relevant to the Southern stereotype (Desegregation of Private Schools), and the other irrelevant (Grain Sales to Russia). The main experiment consisted of four stimulus conditions; two levels of accent (Southern and Midwestern), and two messages. One hundred and ninety students completed the experiment with nearly fifty in each condition.

The results first demonstrated that dialectical similarity and stereotyping were more highly associated when a message was conceptually relevant to a stereotype than with a stereotype-irrelevant message. Second, message agreement was moderately associated with attraction, trustworthiness, competence and message coherence. Third, the direction of the correlations indicated a parallel relationship between stereotyping, attraction, and trustworthiness. Fourth, an interaction occurred between the message relevant to the stereotype and the dialect associated with the stereotype producing disproportionately low means for all dependent variables. Fifth, stereotyping was negatively associated with competence in the message-relevant condition. Sixth, both stereotyping and message agreement were moderately associated with the dependent variables. Seventh, neither concept- nor socio-orientation were systematically related to the dependent variables. Eighth, trustworthiness, competence, attraction and coherence were only weakly correlated with the subject's evaluation of the issue. A path analysis was employed to analyze spuriousness in variable relationships. Order No. 77-13,210, 253 pages.

AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONFORMITY AND VERBAL BEHAVIOR

SHELLEY, Deborah Beam, Ph.D.
The Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College, 1976

Supervisor: Professor J. Donald Ragsdale

This study looks at the variable of conformity in terms of its relationship to verbal behavior. It involves an experiment which attempts to discover whether or not the tendency toward conformity is indicated in an individual's verbal behavior. Using language variables from the Syntactic Language Computer Analysis-II (SLCA), a computer approach to content analysis, eight hypotheses were made. It was hypothesized that conformity would correlate negatively with total number of words, verbs, afferent words, negative verbs, modifiers, modified nouns and verbs, source specific words, and future tense. It was hypothesized that conformity would correlate positively with positive verbs, nouns and verbs with no modifiers, and receiver specific words.

Twenty-five subjects were randomly chosen from Speech classes at Louisiana State University and given a pre-test using Sherif and Sherif's method of ordered alternatives. Using a nine point continuum, this test measured their attitudes on five topics in order to determine a topic with a low degree of ego-involvement. This topic was then used in the experiment. Subjects were divided into two groups of nine pilot and sixteen experimental subjects. Each subject was then placed in a group with three confederates whom he was led to believe were fellow subjects and with whom he would participate in a discussion to be taped, involving the topic "the value of a liberal arts education." Confederates then attempted to persuade the subject as far as possible from his original stand. His position on the continuum at the end of the discussion, verbally reported by the confederates, represented his post-discussion score. The subject's conformity score was calculated as a ratio of the absolute difference between his pre-test and post-discussion scores to nine (the number of possible positions on the continuum). The larger the ratio, the more conformity was involved. Two experimental subjects were then dismissed due to confederate error.

Using the SLCA-II, the messages of the fourteen remaining experimental subjects were analyzed according to 102 language variables. Results of this analysis were then correlated with the subjects' conformity scores using Pearson's product-moment correlation. All hypotheses were rejected. In addition, none of the 102 variables correlated significantly with conformity. However, there was directionality between conformity and several variables. Specifically, there seemed to be a tendency for conformers to avoid using verbs which showed spatial relationships, to avoid the use of collective words, and to use interrogative words and past tense verbs.

In an attempt to find some link between the variables of conformity and verbal behavior, a type token ratio was then calculated for samples from each of the messages. These ratios were correlated with the conformity scores, and a value extremely close to the value necessary for significance was obtained. Together with the fact that several variables from SLCA-II were very close to significance, this leads to the assumption that some relationship does exist between conformity and verbal behavior. However, further research is necessary in order to reveal the true extent of this relationship.
Order No. 77-10,399, 115 pages.

ERROR ACCEPTABILITY IN WRITTEN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION AS PERCEIVED BY BUSINESS EDUCATORS AND BY BUSINESS COMMUNICATORS

SIMPSON, Kawanna Jo, Ed.D.
University of Kentucky, 1976

Director: Dr. Vernon A. Musselman

There exists no recognized consensus of what businesspersons consider to be acceptable English usage and acceptable placement procedures in written business communication. Consequently, business educators have been in a quandry regarding objectives and standards for student performance. The purpose of this study, therefore, was threefold. First, the study determined the existing practices of business communicators. The study then examined the existing opinions and evaluative practices of business educators. And, finally, the study analyzed and compared the standards of error acceptability in written business communication as applied by university-level business educators to those applied by business communicators.

A sample of forty business communication teachers was randomly selected from the population of all business communication teachers in universities in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia.

A sample of forty business communicators was selected from the population of all businesspersons in Central Kentucky utilizing the services of a secretary, with the exceptions of those in the occupational areas of law and medicine.

An instrument was designed for the purpose of determining perceived acceptability of errors in written communication.

The instrument was administered to the business educators by mail, and to the business communicators by interview. Selected demographic data were also acquired from the business communicators.

A complete analysis of the total responses of the business communicators to the forty errors listed on the instrument showed that eight errors are considered mailable, 14 are considered mailable after correction, 17 are considered non-mailable, and one error is rated mailable after correction and non-mailable, equally. The errors rendering an item of correspondence non-mailable are:

Failure to spell out number when used at beginning of sentence
Transposed words

Addition or omission of word which changes meaning of sentence
Disagreement of subject and verb
Failure to double space between paragraphs
Left margin more than one inch smaller than right margin
Left margin more than one inch larger than right margin
Left margin uneven at other than paragraph indentions
Right margin uneven--more than one inch between longest and shortest lines
Signature line two spaces below complimentary close
Uneven paragraph indentions
Letter askew on page (going uphill or downhill)
Strikeover
Unattractive correction
Dirty type
Smudges
Handwritten correction

Chi-square analysis of the data revealed that no significant difference exists between the perceptions of business educators and those of business communicators with regard to error acceptability.

Chi-square analysis of the data collected from the business communicators revealed a significant difference between the responses of businesspersons with more than fourteen years of education and those of businesspersons with fourteen or less years of education.

A significant difference was also found to exist between the responses of businesswomen and those of businessmen with regard to the acceptability of errors in written communication.

The following conclusions were drawn from the data analysis: 1. Business educators are less inclined to allow errors to enter the mail than are business communicators. 2. Business educators perceive a greater percentage of errors in grammar and punctuation to be correctible than do business communicators. 3. While the accumulated data show that business communicators realize the importance of attractive placement and spacing in written communication, it appears that they are more likely to allow such errors to enter the mail than are business educators. 4. Business communicators are more likely to allow grammar and punctuation errors to be corrected as years of experience increase. 5. Businesspersons become more likely, with more education, to have errors corrected as opposed to mailing them or to having the item of correspondence redone completely. 6. Businesswomen have less tolerance for errors in written communication than do businessmen.

Order No. 77-15,973, 150 pages.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONVERSATIONAL RULES IN FOUR-, SIX-, AND EIGHT-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN: AN INVESTIGATION WITH NATURALISTIC AND CONTROLLED METHODOLOGIES

TAYLOR, Stephen Alvin, Ph.D.
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1976

Grounded in the Piagetian and Wernerian view of active-organismic development, this investigation explored the conversational practices and conversational rule-conformity of children ages four, six, and eight years. Specifically, four issues were examined: is age related to the display of an understanding of what constitutes a conversation? is age related to adherence to turn-taking rules? to rules pertaining to timing and interruption? to rules pertaining to topic introduction, maintenance, and changing?

These questions were pursued within two methodologically distinct phases of the research. In the first phase, naturalistic procedures were utilized. The experimenter observed and noted the conversational behavior of children of the respective age groups in classroom interaction among peers. The method of instances--examining conversational excerpts illustrative of typical communicative behavior--was used to provide support for the findings.

A controlled laboratory investigation of the same research questions was also executed. In this phase of the research eighteen children at each age level were divided into six groups of three and assigned a topic of interest to them; the conversations were recorded and transcribed. The transcripts were then subjected to various coding schemes, and those data examined by statistical inference.

The overall findings unequivocally supported a developmental interpretation of emerging conversational rule-conformity, although some conversational practices were shared by all three age groups. More specifically, a grasp of the constitutive rule of conversation (i.e., two or more participants alternately speaking and listening in focused interaction) appeared to be strongly contingent upon age and development. Children, regardless of age, tended predominantly to take speaking turns (i.e., speak one at a time), but conformity to that rule was mediated by variations in setting and number of participants, particularly among the younger interlocutors. Moreover, the means used to allocate speaking turns was age-related. Permissible overlapped speech in the form of simultaneous starts and joint sentence production was observed to occur signifi-

cantly more often among the older children; however, sanctionable overlap (e.g., interruption) was observed at all three age levels. Finally, the topic-related practices of the children were also related to age level. Older children were more inclined to speak relevantly to (and hence, to sustain) a topic, and were more likely to indicate the relevance of new topics to the participants and the preceding conversational themes.

In addition to these substantive findings, a comparison of the two research methodologies was presented. It was noted that particular variables and research questions were better illumined by one or the other methodology. It was argued that the naturalistic method offered breadth of insight (e.g., multiple contexts, various combinations of participants), while the controlled laboratory method offered precision in measurement and analysis of some variables (e.g., timing and overlap phenomena). Order No. 77-9206, 226 pages.

A STUDY OF COMPETITIVENESS BETWEEN SEXES AND THE EFFECT OF COMMUNICATION MESSAGES UPON THE BUILDING OF TRUST

VAN HOEVEN, Shirley Ann, Ed.D.
Western Michigan University, 1976

The purposes of this study were to investigate and measure competitiveness between sexes, to analyze the non-verbal message communicated and to explore whether trust is increased as a result of the type of message sent. For the purpose of this study competition was defined as the desire to rival or contend with another person in order to win, to use strategy. Trust was defined as the assured reliance or faith on the character and truth of a person, to act without fear or misgiving toward a person, a desire to cooperate.

A total of 228 students at Western Michigan University enrolled in the Interpersonal Communication classes, Department of Communication Arts and Sciences Winter term 1976 participated in the research. The Prisoner's Dilemma game was administered to three conditions within each of the eleven class sections. Condition A was used with 38 male and 38 female subjects. Condition B was used with 38 pairs of female subjects and Condition C was used with 38 pairs of male subjects. Subjects in each class were randomly placed in one of the three conditions and then randomly paired opposite each other.

The instrument used for this study was the Prisoner's Dilemma game, a non-zero-sum mixed-motive game, attributed to A. W. Tucker. The game provides the subjects with a situation in which the goals of the players are partially coincident and partially in conflict. Losses to both result when players attempt to maximize their own scores without regard for the gain scores in others while a cooperation choice by both subjects gives the paired players a tied positive score.

The data analysis provided for a comparison of the mean male and female total game scores across all three experimental conditions through the application of the analysis of variance statistic. The results from these data supported the first hypothesis that competitiveness between males and females across all three experimental conditions will not be significantly different when subjects play the Prisoner's Dilemma game. The results failed to indicate that there were differences in competitiveness between males and females of the same sex as well as of the opposite sex.

The data analysis also provided for a comparison of the means of paired subjects according to the types of messages exchanged between subjects and their frequency of trust choices in Game #1 as compared to their frequency of trust choices in Game #2 through the application of the analysis of variance statistic. Results from these data supported the second hypothesis that the types of messages sent influenced the building of trust between these subjects. Additional analysis, using the Scheffé test indicated that there were significant differences among all three types of message groups. These added findings further supported the hypothesis that the type of message sent influences the frequency of trust choices between subjects.

Supplementary data analysis through the application of the two-way analysis of variance statistic, indicated that the type of communication message sent between paired subjects in all three message type groups, highly influenced their frequency of trust choices. These data supported the third hypothesis that there would be no significant interaction effect between Condition A, Condition B, and Condition C and the message variable.

Three basic conclusions were drawn from the study. First, that the sex of students attending Western Michigan University does not appear to be related significantly to their desire to compete with each other, second that the content or type of message communicated between students increases or decreases trust between these same students, and third that the sex of the student sending the message has no significant effect upon the increase or decrease in trust between these same students.

This study confirms the author's belief that competition is a basic behavior of all students on Western Michigan University's campus, yet, when these same students have an opportunity to communicate their feelings, ideas, and intentions they will be more enabled to make decisions and to live lives based on mutual trust. Order No. 77-9304, 73 pages.

LANGUAGE STANDARDS AND COMMUNICATIVE STYLE IN THE BLACK CHURCH

WRIGHT, Richard Louis, Ph.D.
The University of Texas at Austin, 1976

Supervisor: Roger D. Abrahams

The present study examines linguistic form and communicative style in working class and middle class Black preachers. The primary data consists of ten sermons tape-recorded in natural settings at two churches located in Washington, D.C. The informant preachers were of two general types: (1) non-seminary trained, who preached spontaneously, and (2) seminary trained, who prepared from a prepared text. The primary sermon data was supplemented by attitudinal or subjective evaluations in which individual preachers reacted to their own recorded sermons as well as those of other preachers.

The study adopts both a quantitative sociolinguistic paradigm and an ethnography of speaking approach in the analysis. Selected phonological and syntactic variables are quantified and tabulated to plot relative frequencies of occurrences in two situations: (1) during the sermon, and (2) outside of the sermon. In essence, the study quantifies the variable, contextual usage of selected sociolinguistic markers to determine what linguistic and/or extra-linguistic factors account for the observed variation. The analysis indicates that working class, non-seminary trained preachers manipulate a wider and more consistent range of variation in which both standard and nonstandard features strategically interact in the sermon. Ethnographic insights on intracommunity perspectives and values show that variable use of standardness and nonstandardness in working class sermons is sensitive to questions of social function and social meaning. The integration of both quantitative sociolinguistic and ethnographic analyses indicate the heuristic value of going beyond referential meaning and to a study of social function inherent in the use of selected linguistic markers.

The study also analyses the performance and communicative style of Black preachers in terms of their differential use of rhetorical devices which (1) elicit and guarantee the active participation of the audience, and (2) serve to enhance the effectiveness of sermons. These devices are detailed in such a way as to indicate that qualitatively different communicative styles characterize both non-seminary and seminary trained preachers. The study concludes with an argument for the need to extent current sociolinguistic analysis to include an ethnographic perspective on intra-community linguistic and performance values. Order No. 77-4003, 229 pages.